CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method of assisting with control of a communications unit from a remote

5   agent, the method comprising:

>   receiving an instruction message that corresponds to voiced instructions;

>   converting the voiced instructions to control commands;

>   providing a control message corresponding to the control commands; and

>   sending the control message to the communications unit, thereby assisting

10   with the control of the communications unit.

2.   The method of claim 1:

>   wherein the receiving the instruction message further includes receiving

specific information sufficient to identify the communications unit; and

15   wherein the converting the voiced instructions includes converting the voiced

instructions to the control commands that correspond to a type of communications

unit.

3.   The method of claim 2 wherein the voiced instructions are converted to the

20   control commands that correspond to keypad activations at the communications unit.

4.   The method of claim 2 further comprising maintaining a database associated

with the communications unit, the database including one of a parameter status and a

mirrored database associated with the communications unit.

5.   The method of claim 4:

wherein the voiced instructions corresponds to an action comprising one of ;

dialing a number,

looking up a number in a phone book of the communications unit, the

5   phone book incorporated into the mirrored database associated with the

communications unit,

modifying contents of a memory of the communications unit, and

sending a text message;

wherein the control commands will effect the action when executed by the

10   communications unit.

6.   The method of claim 1 further comprising sending a confirmation message as confirmation of the receiving the instruction message.

15 7.   The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving the instruction message occurs at the remote agent and the method further comprises forwarding a first message corresponding to the instruction message to an assistant agent, the assistant agent performing the converting the voiced instructions to the control commands and returning to the remote agent a second message corresponding to the control

20 commands.

8.   The method of claim 7 further comprising selecting the assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents prior to the forwarding the first message, the selecting based on availability of the assistant agent and a ranking of the assistant agent among the plurality of assistant agents.

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9.   The method of claim 8 wherein the availability of the assistant agent is determined by a log on procedure and the ranking of the assistant agent depends on one of an extent of availability of, a timeliness of services provided by, an accuracy of the services provided by, and economic considerations related to the assistant

10   agent.

10.   The method of claim 7 further comprising selecting more than one assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents and forwarding the first message to the more than one assistant agent, each of the more than one assistant agent performing the

15   converting the voiced instructions and the returning the respective second message to provide more than one respective second messages, the method further comprising comparing the more than one respective second messages to detect an error in the more than one respective second messages.

20   11.   The method of claim 10 wherein the selecting more than one assistant agent further comprises selecting a trusted assistant agent and an unknown assistant agent and comparing the respective second messages to evaluate the unknown assistant agent.

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12.	A server arranged and constructed to assist with control of a communications unit, the server comprising:

a receiver to receive an instruction message that corresponds to voiced instructions;

5	a controller, coupled to the receiver to convert the voiced instructions to control commands and to provide a control message corresponding to the control commands; and

a transmitter, coupled to the controller, to send the control message to the communications unit, thereby assisting with the control of the communications unit.

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13.	The server of claim 12:

wherein the receiver further receives specific information sufficient to identify the communications unit; and

wherein the controller converts the voiced instructions to the control

15	commands that correspond to a type of communications unit.

14.	The server of claim 13 wherein the controller converts the voiced instructions to the control commands that correspond to keypad activations at the communications unit.

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15.	The server of claim 13 further comprising a memory for storing a database associated with the communications unit, the database including one of unit specific information, a parameter status, and a mirrored database associated with the communications unit.

16. The server of claim 15:

wherein the controller converts the voiced instructions to the control

commands that, when executed by the communications unit, will effect an action

comprising one of;

5   dialing a number,

looking up a number in a phone book of the communications unit, the

phone book incorporated into the mirrored database associated with the

communications unit,

modifying contents of a memory of the communications unit, the

10   modifying also performed on the mirrored database associated with the

communications unit, and

sending a text message.

17. The server of claim 12 wherein the controller controls the transmitter to

15   further send a confirmation message as confirmation that the receiver received the

instruction message.

18. The server of claim 12 wherein the controller further controls the transmitter

to forward a first message corresponding to the instruction message to an assistant

20   server, the assistant server performing the converting the voiced instructions to the

control commands and returning to the server a second message corresponding to the

control commands.

19.   The server of claim 18 wherein the controller further selects the assistant server from a plurality of assistant servers prior to the forwarding the first message, the assistant server selected based on availability of the assistant server and a ranking of the assistant server among the plurality of assistant servers.

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20.   The server of claim 19 wherein the availability of the assistant server is determined by the controller based on a log on record stored in the memory and wherein the controller determines the ranking of the assistant server based on data maintained in the memory corresponding to one of an extent of availability of, a

10   timeliness of services provided by, an accuracy of the services provided by, and economic considerations related to the assistant server.

21.   The server of claim 18 wherein the controller selects more than one assistant server from a plurality of assistant servers and controls the transmitter to forward the

15   first message to the more than one assistant server, each of the more than one assistant servers performing the converting the voiced instructions and the returning the respective second message to provide more than one respective second messages, the controller further comparing the more than one respective second messages to detect an error in the more than one respective second messages.

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22.   The server of claim 21 wherein the selecting more than one assistant server further comprises selecting a trusted assistant server and an unknown assistant server and comparing the respective second messages to evaluate the unknown assistant server.

23. A software program for assisting with control of a communications unit, the software program when loaded and executing on a processor of a server resulting in the server performing a method comprising:

5   receiving an instruction message that corresponds to voiced instructions;

converting the voiced instructions to control commands;

providing a control message corresponding to the control commands; and

sending the control message to the communications unit, thereby assisting with the control of the communications unit.

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24. The software program of claim 23:

wherein the receiving the instruction message further includes receiving specific information sufficient to identify the communications unit; and

wherein the converting the voiced instructions includes converting the voiced 15 instructions to the control commands that correspond to a type of communications unit.

25. The software program of claim 24, the method further comprising maintaining a database associated with the communications unit, the database including one of a 20 parameter status and a mirrored database associated with the communications unit.

26.   The software program of claim 23 wherein the receiving the instruction message occurs at a distribution server and the method further comprises forwarding a first message corresponding to the instruction message to an assistant agent, the

5   assistant agent performing the converting the voiced instructions to the control commands and returning to the distribution server a second message corresponding to the control commands.

27.   The software program of claim 26, the method further comprising selecting

10   the assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents prior to the forwarding the first message, the selecting based on availability of the assistant agent and a ranking of the assistant agent among the plurality of assistant agents.

28.   The software program of claim 27 wherein the availability of the assistant

15   agent is determined by a log on procedure and the ranking of the assistant agent depends on one of an extent of availability of, a timeliness of services provided by, an accuracy of the services provided by, and economic considerations related to the assistant agent.

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30.   The software program of claim 26, the method further comprising selecting

more than one assistant agent from a plurality of assistant agents and forwarding the

first message to the more than one assistant agent, each of the more than one assistant

agent performing the converting the voiced instructions and the returning the

5   respective second message to provide more than one respective second messages, the

method further comprising comparing the more than one respective second messages

to detect an error in the more than one respective second messages.

31.   The software program of claim 30 wherein the selecting more than one

10   assistant agent further comprises selecting a trusted assistant agent and an unknown

assistant agent and comparing the respective second messages to evaluate the

unknown assistant agent.